

# **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan ANNEX**

## **City of Albany**

### **Introduction**

The City of Albany is a small-sized city located in Alameda County, California. The city has a population of 16,444 people, based on the 2000 census<sup>1</sup>. The City's 2006-07 general fund budget is \$15,100,000. The City employs 90 permanent and 30 temporary employees.

The City provides a full range of municipal services, including police and fire protection, paramedic services, public works, recreation activities, and cultural events. The City operates a Community Center, Senior Center, Teen Center, Child Care Center, and seven parks with playgrounds, ball fields, and tennis courts. In addition, the County of Alameda operates a public library in facilities provided by the City.

### **The Planning Process**

The City's current General Plan was adopted in 1992. The General Plan has a Community Health and Safety Element that includes a discussion of flooding, seismic hazards, fire hazards, emergency preparedness, and hazardous materials. General Plan policies include minimizing the impact of flooding, seismic upgrade of critical public facilities; development of a program addressing unreinforced masonry buildings, and emergency preparedness programs. In addition, as new development occurs, the City functions as lead agency to ensure compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which requires mitigation for identified natural hazards.

Many of the activities conducted by the City were incorporated into the planning process for the multi-jurisdictional plan. The City participated in various ABAG workshops and meetings, including the general "kick-off" meeting and the soft-story charrette. In addition, the City has provided comments on the multi-jurisdictional plan. Finally, the City provided information on facilities that ABAG views as "critical."

The City's Assistant City Administrator, Planning and Building Manager, and Fire Marshal met on a number of occasions to review priorities, identify appropriate City departments, and identify other implementation considerations for the local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The planning process drew heavily on the city's neighborhood based disaster preparedness programs that have involved extensive public participation and a variety of public and city preparedness activities. The City's hazardous mitigation planning process has focused on building on existing programs and identifying gaps that may lead to disaster vulnerabilities in order to work on ways to address these risks through mitigation. Ultimately, this document should be considered for incorporation into the City's General Plan as an appendix to the Community Health and Safety Element.

---

<sup>1</sup> For complete Census information on this city, see <http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/>.

## Hazard and Risk Assessment

The ABAG multi-jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, to which this is an Annex, lists nine hazards that impact the Bay Area, five related to earthquakes (faulting, shaking, earthquake-induced landslides, liquefaction, and tsunamis) and four related to weather (flooding, landslides, wildfires, and drought). This section highlights the specific hazards that are related to the City of Albany.

Since 1950, no disasters have been declared that were isolated within Albany. Furthermore, no catastrophic damage occurred as a result of larger region-wide disasters such as storm damage and earthquakes. General information on disasters declared in Alameda County is at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/disaster-history.html>.

In general, the City of Albany is potentially impacted by all but one of the hazards. The exception is surface earthquake faulting, which is not a hazard in the city of Albany because no known active faults are located in the City. While the City has undertaken a number of general hazard mapping activities as part of the preparation of the Community Health and Safety Element, or as part of review of development projects, the information on the ABAG website at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/> is the most current and is used as the basis for evaluating hazard exposure. The City plans to work with ABAG on a continual basis to improve the risk assessment information being compiled by ABAG.

The analysis of hazard exposure is divided into three sections. The first section evaluates all land uses in potential hazard areas. The second section evaluates public infrastructure in hazard zones. The final section focuses on critical public and community facilities in hazard zones.

### *Land Uses Located in Hazard Areas*

The City examined the hazard exposure of the 1,132 urban acres of land area based on the information on ABAG's website at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickdbh2.html>. The potential hazards include:

- ◆ Earthquake shaking – 1,052 acres are in the highest two categories of shaking potential, in large part because the Hayward fault runs near the eastern portion of the City.
- ◆ Earthquake liquefaction – 664 acres are in areas of moderate, high, or very high liquefaction susceptibility. Most of the Very High risk areas are in Urban Open Space land uses, with most of the developed areas having a Moderate or lower risk.
- ◆ Landslides – There is no area within the City that is considered to be an existing land slide area. Thirty-one (31) acres of the City are within the California Geological Survey study area for earthquake landslides. All but nine of the acres are Urban Open Space.
- ◆ Tsunamis – While tsunamis may be a hazard in the city of Albany, the mapping of the inundation area has not been completed at this time.

- ◆ Flooding – 125 acres are in the 100-year flood plain, while an additional 34 acres are in other areas potentially susceptible to flooding.
- ◆ Wildfires – 7 acres are subject to high, very high, or extreme wildfire threat. A total of 499 acres are in wildland-urban interface fire threat areas.
- ◆ Dam Inundation – 41 acres are subject to inundation in the event of a dam failure.
- ◆ Drought – all 1,132 acres are subject to drought.

In spite of the areas of the City located in flood-prone areas, there are no repetitive loss properties in the City based on the information at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickflood.html>.

### *Infrastructure Exposure to Hazard Areas*

The City also examined the hazard exposure of infrastructure based on the information on ABAG's website at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickdbh2.html>. Infrastructure within the City includes 40 miles of roadway, one mile of BART track, one mile of railroad, and 34 miles of pipeline under roadways.

Potential hazards include:

- ◆ Earthquake shaking – All City infrastructure facilities are the highest two categories of shaking potential.
- ◆ Earthquake liquefaction – 25 miles of roadway, one mile of BART tracks, one mile of railroad track, and 20 miles of pipelines are in areas of moderate, high, or very high liquefaction susceptibility.
- ◆ Flooding – 3 miles of roadway and one mile of pipeline are in the 100-year flood plain, with an additional one mile of roadway and one mile of pipeline are in other flood-prone areas.
- ◆ Landslides – There are no infrastructure facilities in existing landslide areas and no areas within the California Geological Survey study area for earthquake induced landslides.
- ◆ Wildfires – There are no infrastructure facilities in areas of wildfire threat. A total of 18 miles of roadway, one mile of railroad, and 14 miles of pipeline are in areas of wildland-urban interface fire threat.
- ◆ Dam Inundation – one mile of roadway and one mile of pipeline are in an area subject to dam inundation.
- ◆ Tsunamis – While tsunamis may be a hazard in the city of Albany the mapping of the inundation area has not been completed at this time.
- ◆ Drought – is not a hazard for roadways.

## *Critical Facilities in Hazard Areas*

Within the City, critical facilities include seven school sites, seven City-owned facilities, and twelve bridges. Information on the critical facilities in the City is based on the information from ABAG's website at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickcrit.html>.

Potential hazards include:

- ◆ Earthquake shaking – all critical facilities are located in areas with the highest two categories of shaking potential.
- ◆ Earthquake liquefaction – Four schools, three City-owned properties, and seven bridges are located in areas of moderate, high, or very high liquefaction susceptibility.
- ◆ Flooding – One bridge is located in the 100-year flood plain or in other flood-prone areas.
- ◆ Landslides – There are no critical facilities in existing landslides areas and no critical facilities in the California Geological Survey study area for earthquake induced landslides.
- ◆ Wildfires – No critical facilities are located in areas of high, very high, or extreme threat. One school, two City-owned facilities, and four bridges are in wildland-urban interface threat areas.
- ◆ Dam Inundation – no critical facilities are in an area subject to dam inundation.
- ◆ Tsunamis – While tsunamis may be a hazard in the city of Albany, including to critical facilities, the mapping of the inundation area has not been completed at this time
- ◆ Drought – Drought will not affect city buildings directly. However, the city does not operate a water-supply distribution system.

In spite of the areas of the City located in flood-prone areas, there are no repetitive loss properties in the City based on the information at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickflood.html>.

The City plans to work with ABAG during 2005 to improve the risk assessment information being compiled by ABAG by providing information on unreinforced masonry buildings and soft-story apartments located in the City.

Drought, though a potential problem in the City, is not fully assessed. The City will work with ABAG and various water supply agencies on this issue.

The City plans to work with ABAG to develop specific information about the kind and level of damage to buildings, infrastructure, and critical facilities which might result from any of the hazards previously noted. The ABAG Annex states that ABAG will be doing this work in 2005 through early 2006.

As these impacts are not fully developed, the City has reviewed the hazards identified and ranked the hazards based on past disasters and expected future impacts. The conclusion is that earthquakes (particularly shaking), wildfire and in certain areas, flooding, pose significant risks

for potential loss.

## **Mitigation Activities and Priorities**

As a participant in the ABAG multi-jurisdictional planning process, City of Albany staff helped in the development and review of the comprehensive list of mitigation strategies in the overall multi-jurisdictional plan. Priorities were set based on technical feasibility, legal feasibility, economic viability, as well as other considerations. The tentative decision on priority was made based on a variety of criteria, not simply on an economic cost-benefit analysis. These criteria include being technically and administratively feasible, politically acceptable, socially appropriate, legal, economically sound, and not harmful to the environment or our heritage. In addition, the City examined the hazard exposures specific to the City of Albany. The planning process resulted in the identification of the following high priorities for future mitigation activities:

- Initiation of seismic retrofit of police, fire, and City Hall facilities as well as construction of a new emergency operations center.
- Developing a building re-occupancy program to allow outside professionals to inspect buildings in the event of disaster and to streamline repair of residential buildings.
- Interface with national and state government health care initiatives for testing and distributing critical medical supplies.
- Implementation of natural gas safety recommendations of the Seismic Safety Commission
- Distribution of better information to residents regarding potential hazards and mitigation strategies.
- Preparation of City agency recovery plans that outline major issues and tasks that are likely to be key elements of community recovery and to ensure rapid resumption of local government services.
- Maintaining the City emergency operations center in a fully functional state of readiness.
- Developing phone based warning systems for selected geographic areas.
- Participating in multi-agency efforts to mitigate fire threats
- Working with organizations that handle hazardous materials to mitigate risk of release of materials in a natural disaster.
- Developing a joint program with schools to plan for evacuation and sheltering of school children

Over time, we are committed to developing better hazard and risk information to use in making those trade-offs. We are not trying to create a disaster-proof region, but a disaster-resistant one. In addition, several of the strategies are existing City programs.

These draft priorities were submitted to the City Administrator for review. The draft priorities and resolution approving the local plan were presented to the City Council and the public for comment, review, and City Council adoption on January 8, 2007. The final strategies will be proposed as an *Implementation Appendix* to the *City's Community Health and Safety Element of the Albany General Plan*.

## **The Plan Maintenance and Update Process**

The City Administrator's Office will ensure that monitoring of this Annex will occur at least once a year. Review will focus on evaluating the Annex in light of technological changes and significant events, as well as determining whether the plan should be updated.

The City Administrator's Office will ensure that **monitoring** of this Annex will occur. The plan will be monitored on an on-going basis. However, the major disasters affecting our community, legal changes, notices from ABAG as the lead agency in this process, and other triggers will be used. Finally, the Annex will be a discussion item on the agenda of the meeting of City department heads at least once a year in April. At that meeting, the department heads will focus on **evaluating** the Annex in light of technological and political changes during the past year or other significant events. This group will be responsible for determining if the plan should be updated.

Furthermore, the City of Albany is committed to reviewing and updating this plan annex at least once every five years, as required by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The City Planning and Building Manager will contact ABAG four years after this plan is approved to ensure that ABAG plans to undertake the plan update process. If so, the City again plans to participate in the multi-jurisdictional plan. If ABAG is unwilling or unable to act as the lead agency in the multi-jurisdictional effort, other agencies will be contacted, including the County's Office of Emergency Services. Counties should then work together to identify another regional forum for developing a multi-jurisdictional plan. Ultimately, the Mitigation Strategies should be considered for incorporation into the City's General Plan as an appendix to the Community Health and Safety Element.

The public will continue to be involved whenever the plan is updated and as appropriate during the monitoring and evaluation process. As part of the update process, the City will provide the opportunity for the public to comment on the updates.